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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage August 1-3 on the H1N1 flu epidemic, which is quickly spreading across Taiwan; on the heat wave hitting the island; on the year-end mayor and magistrates' elections; and on developments in cross-Straits relations. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the KMT-leaning "China Times" discussed the impact of the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue. The article said Taiwan needs to calmly ponder its role in light of the developments in U.S.-China relations. A separate "China Times" op-ed piece described U.S.-China relations as "inseparable" and said if one just looks at the results, the dialogue certainly has generated good results for world peace. End summary.

A) "View with Calmness the New Situation in the Wake of the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue"

The KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 120,000] editorialized (8/1):

"... When it comes to strategic issues, this year's [dialogue] focused on the nuclear issue in North Korea and Iran and issues such as the war on terrorism and non-proliferation. The issue Taipei is concerned about most -- Taiwan -- apparently was never brought up in this year's dialogue. The [U.S.-Taiwan] arms sales issue was not touched on, nor was the so-called 'one China' position reiterated; it looks as if this once believed to be the core issue in U.S.-China relations did not even appear in this year's dialogue. Some people might be worried if such a development indicated that the 'Taiwan issue' has been marginalized, but this paper does not think so. The fact that the Taiwan issue was not included in this year's dialogue agenda merely indicated that currently there is no major difference between Washington and Beijing on the Taiwan issue. In particular, cross-Straits dialogue is now under way, so Beijing did not need Washington to state its position on the Taiwan issue again. ...

"What Taiwan really needs to pay attention to is how the island should view the new situation [particularly] when the two strong powers -- the United States and China -- are working more and more closely on many issues. How is Taipei going to define its role in such a completely new situation when Washington has clearly indicated that U.S.-China relations are 'the most important bilateral relations in the world?' What this involves is not merely [Taiwan's] role in regional politics, but also the new situation concerning trade, economics, energy and environmental protection. It is time that the ruling and opposition elites confront and ponder [such questions] coolly now."

B) "Beijing, Washington Inseparable"

Taiwan's former Ambassador to South Africa Loh I-cheng wrote in his column in the KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 120,000] (8/3):

"... It was not easy for U.S.-China relations to get to its current state since the two countries formally established diplomatic ties 30 years ago. [U.S. Secretary of State] Hillary Clinton first put

out the word in New York in early February that it was very important to develop U.S.-China relations, then immediately in the same month she flew to Beijing. In April, [U.S. President Barack] Obama met with [his Chinese counterpart] Hu Jintao in London and both agreed to establish the mechanism of a strategic and economic dialogue. In late May, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner visited Beijing, respectively, and in mid-July, Commerce Secretary Gary Locke and Energy Secretary Steven Chu, both Chinese Americans, also visited Beijing under orders. All these showed Washington's deliberate intent to befriend Beijing.

"Frankly speaking, the relations between Beijing and Washington can actually be described using the six-character phrase of Mao Zedong: namely, the two are 'cooperating with and fighting against each other' at the same time. Obama has obviously picked up this [new] skill. The old history of love and hatred between China and the United States is an inextricable knot, which is hard to untangle. But if one just looks at the results, [the dialogue] results certainly have every advantage and not a single disadvantage for world peace."

WANG